

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 02794 181150Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 OMB-01
SSM-03 IO-13 AID-05 PC-01 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05
MCT-01 OC-06 CCO-00 /111 W
-----016564 181158Z /45

O R 181110Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8022
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2794

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION: MAY 18, 1978 1300 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 2716 (DTG 151230Z MAY 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. PALESTINIANS AND FRENCH SOLDIERS CLASHED AGAIN
SOUTH OF TYRE. TWO CHRISTIANS WERE MURDERED IN SIDON. PRESIDENT
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 02794 181150Z

SARKIS HAS REPORTEDLY DECIDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD FOCUS ON
THREE ISSUES: (A) SECURITY, (B) RELATIONS WITH THE PALESTINAINS,
AND (C) RELATIONS WITH SYRIA. FORMER PRESIDENT SULAYMAN FRANGIYAH
HAS BEEN MOVED OUT OF THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT AT THE HOTEL DIEU
HOSPITAL. END SUMMARY.

2. UNIFIL ACTIVITIES.

A. ON MAY 15 NORWEGIAN UNIFIL SOLDIERS AND PALESTINIANS ATTEMPT-
ING TO INFILTRATE SOUTH EXCHANGED FIRE NEAR KAWKABA, ACCORDING
TO IKE. ONE NORWEGIAN SOLDIER WAS SLIGHTLY WOUNDED. ON MAY 17
PALESTINIANS AND FRENCH UNIFIL SOLDIERS CLASHED AGAIN SOUTH OF
TYRE, ALSO ACCORDING TO IKE. THE FRENCH WOUNDED ONE PALESTINIAN
AND ARRESTED THREE OTHERS.

B. PALESTINIAN INFILTRATION CONTINUES. ABOUT 60 GUERRILLAS
HAVE BEEN HOLDING THREE HILLTOP POSITIONS FOUR TO SIX MILES EAST
OF TYRE SINCE MAY 13. ON MAY 17 A 20-MAN SQUAD OF PALESTINIANS
INFILTRATED THROUGH NORWEGIAN LINES IN THE EASTERN SECTOR AND HAVE
SO FAR IGNORED WARNINGS TO PULL OUT. UNIFIL COMMANDER ERSKINE
REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THIS INFILTRATION WHEN HE VISITED KAWKABA
ON MAY 17 TO CONGRATULATE THE NORWEGIANS ON THEIR NATIONAL DAY.

C. THE SWEDISH CONTINGENT HAS PULLED OUT OF LEBANON AND RETURNED
TO ITS ORIGINAL POSITION IN THE SINAI.

D. THE COMMANDER OF THE IRANIAN CONTINGENT IN SOUTH LEBANON LEFT
BEIRUT FOR TEHERAN MAY 17 FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH HIS GOVERNMENT.
HIS DEPARTURE COMES SHORTLY AFTER AN IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY
SPOKESMAN SAID IN TEHERAN THAT IRAN WOULD WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM
LEBANON IF THEY WERE DRAGGED INTO COMBAT HERE.

E. UN ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL ROBERTO GUYER ARRIVED IN BEIRUT
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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 02794 181150Z

MAY 17 WITH A MESSAGE FOR THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT FROM SECRETARY
GENERAL WALDHEIM.

3. TENSION IN SIDON. UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS MURDERED A CHRISTIAN IN
THE SIDON AREA ON MAY 17. (A SUNNI MUSLIM WAS MURDERED ONLY A
FEW DAYS BEFORE.) THE TWO INCIDENTS HAVE INCREASED INTER-CONFESS-
IONAL TENSION IN THE CITY. THE GOVERNOR OF SOUTH LEBANON, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ADF AND THE LEBANESE ARMY, AS WELL AS SUNNI AND MARONITE NOTABLES MET IN THE MARONITE CHURCH OF SIDON TO DISCUSS THESE INCIDENTS. THE CONFEREES DENOUNCED THE MURDERS AND SAID THAT MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN TO ENSURE SECURITY IN SIDON AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

4. GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES. PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS MET WITH PRES-
IDENT SARKIS ON MAY 17 AND, ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT LE-JOUR, AGREED
THAT THE "REFLOATED" CABINET SHOULD FOCUS ON THREE ISSUES: (A)
RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY IN THE BEIRUT AREA AND IN SOUTH LEBANON; (B) RELATIONS WITH THE PALESTINIANS, AND (C) RELATIONS WITH SYRIA. AFTER THE MEETING PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS AGAIN TOLD REPORTERS THAT GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON FULLY ENDORSED UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426. HE SAID THE GOL WAS DOING "EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER" TO HELP CARRY THEM OUT.

5. FRANGIYAH RECOVERING. FORMER PRESIDENT SULAYMAN FRANGIYAH WAS MOVED OUT OF THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT OF THE HOTEL DIEU HOSPITAL, AND A HOSPITAL BULLETIN SAID THERE HAD BEEN AN "OBVIOUS IMPROVEMENT" IN HIS CONDITION. (FRANGIYAH WAS ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL ON MAY 14 AFTER SUFFERING A HEART ATTACK.)
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Message Attributes

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